

IN THE BEGINNING



Site of Silver City - Page 1.

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Yates Center, Kansas
Vol. 6 - No. 22

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Lester A. Harding - Editor

EDITOR'S NOTES —

We have received notes of encouragement occasionally, and we thought that we would share some of what our readers write.

"I continue to be amazed at the amount of meat you manage to contain in your small publication. For the Genealogist, professional or amateur, "In The Beginning" is a gold mine, for you are researching the early families of Woodson County giving dates, relationship, their location in the county, and stories of human interest about them."

— Mrs. Porter Powell, Garden City, Kansas

"Dear Les: I notice that my subscription is up so am sending in my check for the renewal. By the way you need make no apology for the slight increase, it is the most enjoyable money I spend each year. It's kinda funny but you know we like to return to the places from which we sprung and your fine exposures are the best way I know of doing just that."

—Ray E. Weide, Hiawatha, Kansas

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The cover picture was taken when the Woodson County Historical Society sponsored a tour of Silver City, October 16, 1965. The story of Silver City begins in this issue and will be continued in the next issue. The pond in front of the group is referred to as the Hill Pond. Back of the group is quite a pile of the greenish colored rock, where some of the mine shafts were dug. Between the group in the picture and the pond is quite an area that has been scooped out of the side hill, and is called the Hill's Pond periodotite, a name proposed for the igneous rock that weathers to a grayish-yellow clay. This clay is processed at the Micro-Lite plant just to south of the picture. A type of fertilizer for growing crops is manufactured there.

The picture was taken looking to the southeast. The extreme right of the picture shows some of Wilson County.

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Woodson County Historical Society

Yates Center, Kansas

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WOODSON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Organized March, 1965

The November dinner meeting of the Historical Society was held in the dining room of the Woodson Hotel building. The Porter's: James and Joyce entertained.

The 8th Annual meeting of the Woodson County Historical Society was held at the Woodson Hotel, January 23, 1973. Woodson County Queen, Miss Brenda and chaperone, Diane Dixon was present. Dorothy Kimbell presented the program with colored slides of Old Mexico. This was also the election of officers for the next two years.

The nominating chairman, Avis Ireland presented the following names: President, Lester A. Harding; Vice President, Virgil Winfrey; 2nd Vice President, Arthur "Bud" Herder; Secretary, Helen Herring; Treasurer, Elmer F. Krueger. Directors for six year terms: Jeanette Beine and Christina Kramer; Director to fill unexpired term for two years; Phylliss Gustin. The other directors on the board whose terms run for four more years are Walter A. Bowers and Faye Hibbard. The terms of Phylliss Gustin and Leo Collins will expire in two years.

* * * * *

IN MEMORIAN

| | | |
|-------------------|----|------------------|
| Carl C. Nordmeyer | 77 | December 5, 1972 |
|-------------------|----|------------------|

Mr. Nordmeyer held a Life Membership in the Historical Society. He had lived for many years in the Toronto area.

* * * * *

| | | |
|------------|----|------------------|
| Rose Wille | 77 | December 6, 1972 |
|------------|----|------------------|

Miss Wille had lived at Piqua all of her life. She was a Charter Member of the Woodson County Historical Society.

* * * * *

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|------------------------|----|-----------------|
| Mrs. Elsie Hassenpflug | 89 | January 3, 1973 |
|------------------------|----|-----------------|

Mrs. Hassenpflug was a Charter Member of the Woodson County Historical Society, although she lived away from here at the time she joined. She had previously lived in this county. She had attended several meetings.

* * * * *

| | | |
|-------------|----|-----------------|
| S.K. Taylor | 89 | January 7, 1973 |
|-------------|----|-----------------|

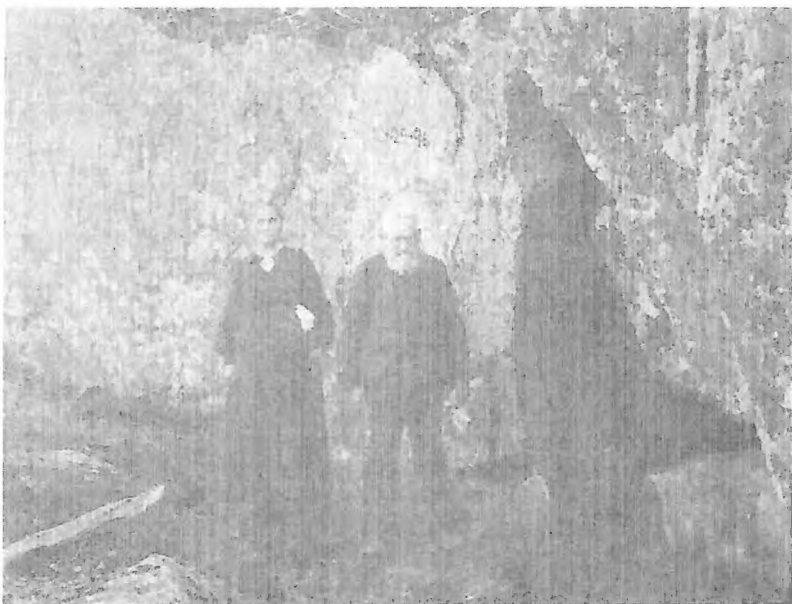
Mr. Taylor had lived in Woodson County many years. He held a Life Membership in the Woodson County Historical Society.

THE HARDING FAMILIES —

In the telling of the Harding's we will tell mostly about George A. and Curtis B. Harding families.

George and Curt were brothers and were very close in their family relations. They were both born on a farm near the small town of Corunna, in DeKalb county, in northeastern Indiana. Their parents were Albert and Arminda (Smith) Harding. The small farm on which they were born adjoined the homestead of their paternal grandparents, Dimmick and Sarah Harding.

Dimmick Harding was born in Pennsylvania, in 1803. With his parents, brothers and sisters moved to Wayne County, New York. Here he met Sarah Pike, and they were married. They made several moves, but in September 1841, they moved to Richland township, in Dekalb County, Indiana, where he purchased a homestead from the government for \$1.50 an acre.



Arminda and Albert Harding—Standing at the entrance to Cooper's Cave, Woodson County. This couple who were grandparents of the writer and editor of this publication, lived for awhile in a small house across the road east of the old Burt store. This was about 1906-07. They were both born in Indiana and lived most of their lives around the town of Corunna. Arminda was an amateur photographer and many of the pictures that we have of that time were taken by her.

Albert Harding was always fond of hunting, fishing and trapping. He was also a craftsman, being handy at making boats and canoes. At one time he operated a hardware store at Corunna. Grandfather Harding was also an itinerant preacher. He had no certain church to preach in, but would walk several miles to preach in a cross-roads schoolhouse. He was first a Baptist but later changed to the Seventh Day Adventists.

The parents of Arminda Harding were Darius and Julia Ann (Kingsbury) Smith. Four of her five brothers served in the Union Army during the Civil War. Two lost their lives.

* * * * *

George and Curt were from a family of four boys and three girls. Their parents were poor, and at a young age the boys began to fend for themselves. About in 1891, the two brothers decided to 'go west'. George was 19 and Curt 16. While Curt was the youngest he was always a large raw-boned fellow as many of our readers will remember.

They 'bummed' their way and started west, by riding the rails. Somewhere in Nebraska they decided they were far enough from home and started back. How they ever got into it we never learned, but they got into a cattle car with a bunch of longhorn cattle headed for the stockyards of Chicago. One particular longhorn steer evidently did not like the looks of the boys and started making trouble. He started after Curt who jumped and climbed to an overhead hay rack as the long horns ran up under his flying coattails. The steer then moved towards George who had armed himself with a pistol before leaving Indiana. George backed and squatted down in a corner with the pistol pointed at the steer's head. But the steer stopped just a few feet away.

The next spring, 1892, George decided to come west by himself, and headed for Colorado. However, he also decided to stop at Yates Center to visit some old friends, John and Harvey Meyers whom he had known in Indiana. The Meyers' family lived along Turkey Creek, in the Finney community seven miles north and three west from Yates Center. John Meyers had a blacksmith shop along the road just to the east of the creek bridge.

George thought he would like to stay here and sent for his brother Curt. Shortly after Curt arrived the brothers were staying around the Finney vicinity. One night found them without a place to sleep so they made their own arrangements for lodging by climbing into some hay in the barn of W.H. Peake. The next morning as Mr. Peake came to the barn to do chores he discovered the two 'bums' in his barn. After talking to the two boys for awhile, finding out who they were and what they were doing there, Mr. Peake invited the boys to the house for breakfast. This started a friendship that lasted over many years and into the second and third generations. (For many years this writer considered the Peake home as his second home.)

As we mentioned above the Harding brothers had started out on their own at an early age. They had also learned to protect themselves at an early age. They were great hands to wrestle and box, and playing baseball were their main sports. Curt was the boxer and George the wrestler. And at times it seemed that they would rather run towards a fight than away from one. Neither would back off from a fight.

* * * * *

We will separate the Harding brothers for awhile, as we tell about each one.

George Arthur Harding was born on July 4, 1872. His schooling was very limited. Sometimes working for his board and attending a country school, during the wintertime. He did a considerable lot of trapping for muskrats in the swamps not far from his home.

After coming to Woodson County he soon took up his trade of plastering houses and building brick chimneys. While attending parties, box suppers and the Finney Church, George became acquainted with Carrie Belle Butler, who always went by the name of Belle. Their courting was done by going places in a one-horse, two-wheeled cart.

On December 25, 1893, they were married at the home of the bride's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Wm. B. Butler. (The story of the Butler family was in the Volume 3-No. 9 — January, 1970, issue of "In The Beginning.")

Belle was born on the homestead of her parents, eight miles north and four miles west of Yates Center, October 6, 1875. Incidentally this was about the same month and year that Yates Center was voted in as the county seat. Belle grew up in the Finney vicinity and for years was the organist at the Finney M.E. Church. Her parents, W.B. and Annie Butler were charter members of the Finney organization and instrumental in the building of that church. Her education was obtained at the Finney school and later attended Normal Institute in Yates Center. She taught several terms of school in the rural schools of Woodson County. Her first term was taught when she was 17 years of age.

Four children were born to George and Belle Harding, namely— Arthur W., Percy R., Ethel Mae, and Lester A.

Perhaps the high point in the life of George A. Harding was when he was elected as Representative of Woodson County, on the Democratic ticket, and served two terms in the Kansas Legislature, 1924-26. As mentioned in the beginning of this article George had a very limited education, not past the third grade, but in his later years he had become a forceful speaker for what he believed in. However, a rheumatic condition that he acquired while carrying the Kansas City Star and Times in Kansas City, Mo., had damaged his heart to some extent and he died at the age of just less than 58 years. Both George and Belle are buried in the Askren Cemetery.

Curtis Burdette Harding was born April 16, 1875. He was a gangling youth and grew to be a large man. He was a painter by trade, although he farmed to some extent and was a carrier of the Kansas City Star and Times in Kansas City, Mo., for a total of 13 years. He started up a couple of paper routes in the Country Club district in Kansas City when that area was being built up.

He was married February 4, 1895, to Mary Lettie Lovell, by Rev. Woodside. To this union three sons were born, one dying in infancy. The other sons were Glen C. and Cleo F.

Curt like his brother George was a kind hearted fellow, and generous almost to a fault.

Mary L. Lovell, was born in Wilson County, Kansas, April 28, 1876. She was a daughter of Milton J. and Ginerva Lovell, who at the time of the marriage of Curt and Mary, lived along what is now US-75, seven and a half miles north of Yates Center. In later years the Lovell's moved to Oklahoma. M.J. Lovell was postmaster at Byran six years.

Curt and Mary Harding moved back to a farm north of Burt in 1927, where they lived rest of their lives. They are buried in the Sira Cemetery.

* * * *

The children of George and Belle Harding: Arthur W. married Melvina Wood, February 17, 1916. Their children were: Melvin A., who died at the age of 5 years, Katherine, who died at age of two months; George Allen, who married Cleo Wilson, Evelyn R., who married Loyd Westra; Marilyn Ann, who is married to H.W. Beatty, and Maynard Lee, who married Mary Jabben.

Percy R., who married Elizabeth Fitch on August 22, 1916. Their children were: Florence Mae who married Robert Meadows; Herbert E., who married Vonda Griffith, Jennabelle R., who married Grant Crow. Pauline E., who married Walter Baber. Robert D., who married Madeline LaGyne Hawkins. Alice Ethlyn, who married Donald V. Hesket.

Ethel Mae, who married Walter Weide on October 7, 1917. Their children were: Marjorie Belle, who married Bernie Satterwhite. Elvin George, who was killed during World War II, when his plane crashed in Sicily, after a bombing raid over Roumania, November 19, 1944. Frances E. was married to Ralph Lake. Mayona M., married Curtis Stoll, Milton E., married Shirley Boyce, Barbara J., married Gary Bennett.

Lester A., married Edith E. Williams, on February 17, 1928. Their children were: Dorothy Fay, who married Gerald D. Osburn and Alberta Marie, who married Robert E. Edwards.

The children of Curtis and Mary L. Harding were three sons, one dying in infancy.

Glen Carl, who married Clara B. McDaniel. Their children were Franklin B. who married Alice Morris; Lois Maxine, who married Edwin Herman; Donna Marie, who married Gerald Riley; Lorraine who married Theodore Dutro; and Kenneth who married Shirley -----.

Cleo Frank, who married Helen Gillette, September 1, 1956.



In this picture of both Harding families are (Standing in back row) Arthur W., Percy R., Ethel Mae, Glen C. (Sitting) Mrs. Belle Harding holding Lester A., George A., Curtis B., Mrs. Mary L. Harding, with son, Cleo F., between them.

For the past 80 years there have been some of these Harding families living around the Burt vicinity, along Turkey Creek and Duck Creek, and taking part in all community affairs. There were some members of these two families belonging to and taking part in the Modern Woodmen of America, that had a camp at Burt for many years.

Also down through those years there were a very few if any baseball teams at Burt, that some member of this family did not play or manage.

We have shaken rather hard on this family tree, but we hope that our readers will agree that we did not shake too hard. While the writer does not live in that area any more it is still home, and without much effort we can revive and re-live many pleasant memories.

THE YATES CENTER METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH —

The First Methodist Church as it was known as for many years had its beginning at Kalida around 1870 and moved to Yates Center in 1876. Services were first held in the stone schoolhouse. The first sermon preached to a Methodist congregation in Yates Center, was by Rev. W.H. Chaffey of Neosho Falls.

In April, 1877, the Methodist Episcopal Church of Yates Center was incorporated. The first Trustees appointed were Abner Yates, William Rutledge, J.W. Depew, George Wille, R.D. Webster, O.P. Augustine, George Mentzer, I.S. Jones and A. Smith.

In 1880 a move was started for the building of a church building. A warranty deed was made July 25, 1877 by Abner Yates and his wife, Mary Yates of Jacksonville, Illinois to the Trustees of the Methodist Episcopal Church in consideration of One Dollar for the lots 4-5-6, Block 54 in the town of Yates Center, in Woodson County of the State of Kansas according to the recorded plat thereof, "Provided that the Trustees shall at all times permit such ministers and preachers belonging to the Methodist Episcopal Church as shall from time to time be duly authorized by the General Conference of the Ministers of our church or by the Annual Conference to preach and expound God's Holy Word and to execute the discipline of the church and to administer the sacraments therein according to the true meaning and purpose of our deed of conveyance. "This deed was notarized in Morgan County, Illinois, August 2, 1877.

Two members of the church and prominent citizens of Yates Center, William and Edward Rutledge, brothers, had lumber and material shipped from Illinois, for the building of a frame church. Up until this time church services and a Union Sunday School had been held in the stone school house. There were forty-three members when the church was organized.

The frame building was finished in 1880, at a cost of \$1,000.

The following list of pastors have served the Yates Center Methodist Church from 1875 to 1970.

| | | |
|----------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|
| Rev. J. McNulty | Rev. H.A. Church | Rev. E.W. Spencer |
| Rev. T.A. Walker | Rev. W.L. French | Rev. H.H. Fowler |
| Rev. W.A. Carmardine | Rev. Clyde Hale | Rev. C.V. Schulenberg |
| Rev. J.C. Hull | Rev. G.R. Lawellyn | Rev. J.H. Hoopingartner |
| Rev. W.T. White | Rev. A.W. Johnson | Rev. E.E. Satterlee |
| Rev. C.E. Greager | Rev. R.J. Zeidler | Rev. R.V. Nickel |
| Rev. A.M. McDole | Rev. E.K. Resler | Rev. O.W. Dewey |
| Rev. N.V. Moore | Rev. O.W. Clower | Rev. F.V. Dillon |
| Rev. S.P. Cullison | Rev. R.G. Anderson | Rev. A.S. Whitimore |
| Rev. C.W. Bailly | Rev. G.D. Almquist | Rev. R.E. Johnson |
| | | Rev. D.E. Mack |

The Sabbath School was organized January 2, 1881. N.F. Follett as Superintendent, Edward Rutledge, Assistant Superintendent; I.C. Jones, Treasurer; J.W. Depew, Librarian, Charley S. Jones, Secretary.

Sunday School Superintendents 1881 to 1970. N.F. Follet, W.P. Dickerson, A.M. Kannard, N.V. Moore, C.A. Hale, Hayes M. Coe, H.T. Laidlaw, Mrs. Jessie (R.H.) Trueblood, W.T. Markham, R.B. Coleman, D.S. Bell, Ray Butler, Myran Rhea, Wayne Trichler, Paul Laidlaw, Ray Butler.



The first church as it was built in 1880. It was built on the southeast corner of State and Mary streets, and the picture was taken from the southwest.

During Rev. Baily's pastorate (1900-06) plans were made for a new church building as the congregation had outgrown their quarters and needed more room. The members felt that the need for a larger parsonage was greater than for a new church building, but Rev. Bailey insisted that the church should be built first.

Before construction on the new church begun, Rev. Bailey and family were moved and Rev. H.A. Church was sent to Yates Center in 1906. While the construction was in progress all church services were held in the Stockebrand Auditorium. The corner stone was laid in 1906. Fred L. Stephenson was treasurer of the building fund and from his records we find that the total cost of this new brick church was \$14,555.69. The new

church was dedicated in the morning worship service March 24, 1907. The new parsonage was built in 1909.

The General Conference of 1968 passed and confirmed the Union of the Evangelical United Brethren and the Methodist Churches into one organization to be known as the United Methodist Church. The uniting of the two Yates Center congregations—the Zion and the First was during the pastorate of Rev. Richard E. Johnson and a student minister, Rev. David Mack, with all church services being conducted in the former Zion church.

Rev. Robert Peters is the present pastor for this congregation—1973.

* * * *

MORE ABOUT THE FALLS HOUSE —

In the October, 1972, Vol. 5 - No. 20 issue of "In The Beginning," we told about the Falls House at Neosho Falls, but did not know any of the people in the picture, but found out.

Standing on the balcony of the hotel was: Mrs. T.L. Reid and to her right were her children: Edith, Maud, Harry and Walter Reid. The man with his foot on the back of the stage or omnibus is not identified, but the man on the other side of the post is Thomas L. Reid, proprietor of the hotel. Next to Reid is Thomas Edison, an inventor of national fame. It seems that Edison had come west to promote a new company that he was organizing in New York. He had some friends in Neosho Falls, and was here trying to sell some stock in his company. Edison stayed about a week here at the Falls House and became good friends with Thomas Reid.

Dr. J.L. Jones is the man holding his prize horse to the left of the picture. Dr. Jones came to Woodson County from Kentucky in 1872.

In 1910 Thomas Edison went to California and came back through Topeka, on the Union Pacific Railroad. He sent word to Thomas Reid that he would be in Topeka at a certain time. Reid went to Topeka, and spent a couple of hours visiting with Edison in his private car.

* * * *

Also in Vol 5 - No. 20, on page 16, the top picture of the Vernon School District No. 20, the small boys not identified in the picture are: James Almond, Leslie Frost, Carl Keske, Harry and Clarence Gregerson, Clarence Henderson and Clarence Knapp.

These pupils were identified for us by one of the pupils in the other picture, Lola Almond McConnell of Aurora, Nebraska.

* * * *

The identification of the people in the Falls House picture was given by E. Guy Reid, of near St. Louis, Missouri, who was a son of T.L. Reid, and about the only one of the family not in the picture,

MORE ABOUT BURT —

Mr. and Mrs. O.G. Mulsow, took over the operation of the Burt Store for the second time in 1945. Not long after taking over, O.G., or better known as Oscar, passed away. For awhile Alta kept the store going, before selling out to Mr. and Mrs. Wendall Stockebrand in 19--. While the Stockebrands were living here the house south of the store burned to the ground.

The Stockebrands sold the store to Mr. and Mrs. Arnold Cook. Mrs. Cook ran the store while Arnold opened up a welding shop. The Cook's moved the oil field house belonging to John Haas to Burt. This house had originally been on the oil lease on the Tony Allen farm, known as the Allen Pool.

The Burt store was closed in 1964, although the Cook's still maintain a welding and repair shop at Burt. For almost 84 years the Burt store was a landmark in the north and west part of the county. This was the last of the country stores that once dotted the county. During the life time of the Burt store, Noah Old ran it the most years of any one owner, having ran it for 25 years altogether.

* * * *

THE JOSEPH GORDON FAMILY —



Back row-L to R: India, Grace, Martha Jane, Mabel B., Bessie.

Seated - Samuel T., Joseph and Bert.

India was married to Forrest Randall. Their children were Ethel (Mrs. Chester Old), Floyd, Deane and Luriel (Mrs. Clarence Mathews). Floyd was married to Vera Vermillion and Deane was married to Selma Jarrett.

Grace was married to Frank Reed. Their children were: Elsie (Mrs. Bryon Hamilton), and Marjorie, who married Neil Toedman. Years later after

their spouses died, Grace was married to George Butler.

Bessie was married to -----Snyder. They had one son, Harry. Later she was married to George Butler. Their children Joe B., who married Jessie Eyler; Ray F., who married Gladys Strohm, and Madge, who married Ralph Waters.

While serving in the Armed Service, during World War I, Bert Gordon died at Camp Funston, Fort Riley.

Samuel T. Gordon, married Florence Williams. Their children were: Alfred E. who married Vivian Green; Alice J., who married Russell Stockebrand and Lucy E., who married Herbert Wait. Before her marriage to Sam Gordon, Mrs. Williams had two daughters, Bessie and Edna Williams. Bessie married Joe Steiner.

Mabel B., married Noah L. Old. Their children were: Jessie who married Claude Merrill; Gordon, who married Juanita Lusk, and Jamie L. who married Hazel Peek. Mabel B. died when Jamie was two weeks old. Mr. and Mrs. O.G. Mulsow raised Jamie from that time. Gordon made his home with the Frank Reed's.

The Gordon's also had two sons that died before this picture was taken. Glennie J. who died at the age of six, and John E., who at the age of 18, took his own life.

* * * *

Joseph Gordon was born in March 1844, at Randolph, Indiana. On November 15, 1861, at the age of 17 years, he enlisted in Company E., 57th Indiana Volunteer Infantry. He was wounded at the battle of Kenesaw Mountain. In February, 1865, after serving 3 years and 3 months, he received his honorable discharge and went back to his home in Indiana.

On February 3, 1866, Joseph Gordon was married to Martha Jane Ruble, at Cerro Gordo, Indiana. Six of their eight children mentioned were born in Indiana, Mabel and Glennie were born in Woodson County.

It was in the year of 1882, that the Joseph Gordon family left Indiana and came west to Kansas. Sometime after coming here Mr. Gordon purchased 40 acres from J.D. Collins. This farm was in the center of the Finney community—seven miles north and three miles west from Yates Center. Collins was postmaster of Finney and had a small stock of groceries. When he left the postoffice went to the Frederick Arnold home.

In 1888, Mr. Gordon traded his 40 acres to E.J. Troyer for the Burt store. The Yates Center News of May 13, 1889, gives this account: "Joe Gordon the Burtville merchant is doing a rushing business. He keeps everything in stock from a spool of thread to a bottle of "Lightning Pain Killer," and sells cheap. Joseph Gordon sold the store in this same year 1889, and purchased the Commercial Hotel in Yates Center. This hotel was about where the Swope Implement Co., is now located.

After operating this hotel for a couple of years, the Gordons sold out and headed for Oklahoma where they made the "Run" into the Cherokee Strip. They settled for a few years in Enid, where they kept a feed store. In 1906, they came back to Burt and bought a half interest in the store.

Frank Gordon, a brother of Joseph, came to the Finney vicinity when Joseph did. Sometime in the 1880's, a cyclone came through that neighborhood and demolished Franks house and badly injured him. He soon left and went back to Indiana.

A Group of Friends and Neighbors Around Burt—1912-13.



Left to Right — Grace Crumrine-Crawford, Edna Williams, Grace Peake-Kier, Susie Peake, Ethel Randall Old, Chester Old, June Peake-Culbertson, Charles J. Peake, Leland Culbertson, Mary Wells-Peake, Mrs. Mary Crumrine, Mabel Gordon-Old, holding her son, Gordon; Noah Old, holding his daughter, Jessie.

* * * *

THE BURT HALL —

The original Burt Hall was the first school building at Pleasant View that was bought by the Grange sometime in the 1890's and moved to the site a half mile south and a ways to the east of the present Burt. It was located on the south side of the road. It was known at that time as the Grange Hall. Also at that time there were several members of the Christian Science Church in that locality and for awhile held their church services in the hall.

In 1900 the Modern Woodman of America lodge was organized at Burt, and for awhile their meetings were held at the Grange Hall. Later they bought the building and moved it to Burt just to the north of the present hall. Besides lodge meetings a literary group was held in the hall. Many hot debates were held in this hall. The debators were not as a rule well educated, but mostly men and sometimes women who debated for the love of the pastime.

About 1915 a group of boys were playing in the hall. It had been cleaned that afternoon in preparation for a meeting that night. In a scuffle a kerosene lamp was overturned and burst in flames as it hit the floor. The fire spread over the hall before the boys could get it out. The building was burned to the ground.

The following year a new building, (the present one) was built almost entirely by members of the Woodman lodge and some of the neighbors. A stock company was organized and shares sold. This was known as the Burt Stock Company. While the Modern Woodman was discontinued at Burt many years ago the hall is still owned by the stock company, although the Pleasant View Grange hold their meetings there and have charge of the upkeep of the building.

The Modern Woodman was discontinued at Burt in 1929. At one time the Burt Modern Woodman was a strong organization and much good was done by its members.

From the time that the present hall was built there has been meetings of all kinds held there. We remember a Ku Klux Klan meeting held there in the 1920's, with members wearing those spooky-looking garbs and masks. Two prominent ministers from Yates Center, were the main speakers that night. The Klan was fairly strong in Woodson County at that time.

A moving picture show that showed a different show each night was at the hall for a week. That was before the day of 'Talkies.' We do not remember how the music was furnished. The dialogue was printed or 'flashed' on the screen.

Entertainments of all kinds, dances, farm, political, township and religious meetings and in fact almost every kind of meeting has been held in the Burt Hall. Although it had rather a short court, basketball games were played in the hall.

The Church of God Holiness held services in the hall for several years, and at one time had quite a membership. Many picnic dinners and programs were held in the hall.

* * * *

For many years there was a baseball team at Burt. The first teams in that vicinity went by the name of Liberty.

What is believed to be one of the first if not the first matched baseball team in the northwest part of the county was played on July 4, 1893. The

team from around here was known as Liberty and they played a team from Buffalo. This game was played just to the east side of Turkey Creek, about a quarter mile east of where the Finney schoolhouse stood. This was seven miles and two and three quarters west of Yates Center.

The game was played on land on the farm occupied by John and Harvey Meyers. They lived in the house just along the east side of Turkey Creek. John Meyers had a blacksmith shop along the north side of the road as the road wound around from the creek bridge to the top of the hill east.

This was around the time that the Harding brothers, George and Curt came from Indiana. They had stopped for a visit with the Meyers brothers, who they had known in northeastern Indiana. They had played ball together near the little town of Corunna, Indiana, and brought some knowledge of the game here with them.

Town ball was the game mostly played here then. A game where 2-4-6 or 8 could play. A batted ball caught on the first bounce was out, and as the runner advanced to a base if the ball was thrown between him and the base he was out. But the game of baseball was played here at a Fourth of July picnic in 1893, with the following players and positions. Pitchers were: George Harding, Harry Simpson; catchers, Harvey Meyers, Ira Butler; first base, Curt Harding; second, Clarence Rogers; third, Bill Peters; short stop, Bert Manifold; outfielders, Warnie Arnold, John Meyers, John Peake and Ed Simpson.

At that time a team consisted of ten players. They had no ball glove, but he was permitted to stand back from the batter until after two strikes were on the batter. The baseball was larger than now-no rubber center and a different style of cover. The pitchers mound was 51 feet from home plate.

About four years later another team was organized in the vicinity of Finney. Their diamond was about three-quarters of a mile west of the Finney school, on land belonging to W.H. Peake. This team as organized were: John Peake, captain and 3rd base; Bill Manifold and Harry Montgomery, pitchers; Sam Lovell and Harry Sturdivan, catchers; Ray Cannady, 1st base; Jake Lovell, 2nd base; Jim Marshall, 3rd base; George Stewart and Elmer Rogers, shortstop, Bert Butler, Henry Mollnow and John Williams, outfielders.

Having no backstop, an extra player was allowed to help the catcher and catch foul balls. Foul balls did not count as strikes, but batter was out if the foul was caught in the air. When the distance between the pitchers mound and the batters box was changed from 51 feet to 60 feet, the present foul rule came in.

There have been many baseball teams at Burt since that time and there have been some very good teams. The writer played his first game with Burt when about 14 years old, and his last game when about 44. And it would be very difficult for us to tell just what team was the best.

As near as we remember the first year we played as a regular member of the team, other players were: Glen Harding, Arthur Stockebrand, Elmer Miller, Ervin Guissert, Guy Corbin, Grant Duncan, Eugene and Ray McKinney, Guy Smith, Ray Redick, Lee Steele.

These boys may not have all played the same year, but all along about that time. We can remember when there were three baseball teams at Burt and we were on the third team.

THE FREDERICK SCHAEDE FAMILY —

The name of Frederick Schaede, could be some confusing as there were two men, father and son by that name that lived on the same homestead in Eminence township along the Parallel Line. But we will start out with the elder.

Frederick Schaede was born at a little village named Freideburg, Brandeburg, Germany. They were farmers by occupation. In 1873, Mr. Schaede and family crossed the Atlantic Ocean to America, and then on westward to Woodson County, Kansas.

Here Frederick Schaede took up a homestead in the Northeast quarter of section 6-Twp. 26 - Range 16. He purchased the quarter section from John Everson.

Before leaving Germany, Frederick was married to Miss Bertha Kendt, April, 1871. Their children were: Frederick or Fritz, as he was always known by, Anna, Hulda, Amelia, Flora, Herbert, Bessie and Lillie.

When the Schaede family moved to the farm they purchased, they moved into a log house, not far from a branch of South Owl Creek. After living in the log house for a few years, a native stone house was built, and is still standing and being used.

* * * * *



The family of Mr. and Mrs. Frederick Schaded (back row- L to R) Flora, Frederick, Hulda, Anna, Amelia. Seated in front row: Mrs. Bertha Schaede, Herbert, Lillie, and Mr. Schaede. The daughter Bessie mentioned above was not living at the time the picture was taken, and will be told about later.

* * * *

The families of the Schaede children: Frederick or Fritz married Anna Schultz. Their children were: William, who married Myrtle Poole; Walter and Howard who neither married. and Irma who married Thomas E. Smith.

Anna, who married William J. Stange. Their children were Lorene, who married Arthur W. Stockebrand; Everett, who married May Craigsman; his twin sister Edith (Sleeper); Earl and Thelma (Connors).

Hulda, who married L.B. Parish.

Amelia, married Fred Buhalts, they had one daughter Florence. Mr. Buhalts suffered a fatal accident while working on the north side of the square in Yates Center. Later Ameilia married Roy Singleton. Florence married Wm. McClure.

Flora married Robert Gregg. Their children were Mildred who married John Althouse; Robert R. who married Helen Johnson, and Maxine who married Velton Stewart.

Herbert who married Ethel Pratt. Their children were Helen, who married Ronald Moerer, Ruth, who married Max Shaw; Herbert E., who married Caunita Morris, and Wilma who married John Bishop.

Lillie married Charles Hartwig. Their children were: Charlotte, who is married to Wm. A. Lewis; Howard, who married Dorothy Zak; Joyce married J.D. Warden; Neil who married Hilda Singletarry; Billie married Ethel Bugbee; Charles Jr., who married Helen Carder.

* * * *

It was during the spring of 1895, on June 7, that a tragedy befell the family of Frederick and Bertha Schaele. On a Sunday afternoon they loaded the six children in the two seated surrey and went for a visit at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Hartwig, about six and a half miles east and a mile and half north from the Schaele home. A heavy rain storm came up while they were there and it was late when they started for home. Turning west where the Prairie Flower, District No. 22 stood.

Just over a mile to the west was a crossing where South Owl Creek crossed the road. The crossing did not run straight across with the road but turned some. By this time the stream was rolling high and much higher and swifter than Mr. Schaele anticipated. The team lost their footing and were swept off their feet into deeper water overturning the surrey.

Mr. and Mrs. Schaele and five of the children managed to get hold of something to hang onto, but 5-year old Bessie was swept under the water. Both of the horses were drowned. Mr. Schaele managed to get on the west bank and run to the house of Wm. Launder, a half mile to the west and about three-fourth mile north. As help arrived Mrs. Schaele and the five children who were clinging to the overturned surrey and to tree branches were rescued. It was not until the next evening that Bessie's body was found, about 60 yards below the ford.

SILVER CITY —

If all of the stories and tales, both fact and fiction were told about Silver City and surrounding territory was compiled into one volume it would be a huge book. Much has been compiled and written by teachers and students from Kansas University at Lawrence, dealing with the geology of the area. We will try and give some of the highlights.

The area called Silver City covered an area about one mile long and about a third that wide and mostly in the north side of section 32, and south edge of section 29, Twp. 26, range 15. This is on what has been known as the George Hill (Both father and son) farm.

With the sun shining just right, especially right after a rain, tiny gold colored specks can be seen in different parts of the hill. Whether it was some early settlers or some one traveling along a nearby wagon trail is not known.

But the word spread like wildfire, that the prospects of gold and silver deposits were in this hill. The area on top of this hill became almost a tent city in a short time. Claims were staked out and shafts were opened. Some of the names of people sinking these shafts were: Van Meter, whose claim was called the Yellowjacket. Some of the Puckett's, Blackwood, and H.A. Nichols had claims with shafts dug to certain depths.

This was about 1878-79. Yates Center was just getting started as a town, and the historical account of this gold 'rush' was described by Mrs. J.W. Depew in this manner — "The same fervor of excitement that surged thru the veins of the forty-niners in the hectic days of California gold rush brought scores of men to the scene of a silver find some twelve or fifteen miles southwest of Yates Center. Rumors of this newest El Dorado had spread like wildfire and daily through our town by covered wagon, horseback and a foot, battered old prospectors, shared the road with young fellows heeding the call of adventure for the first time. No need to speculate on the destination of a man with a few possessions wrapped in a bandanna and tied to the end of a stick carried over his shoulder."

The Topeka Commonwealth, of June 28, 1879, carried this account. "Professor B.F. Mudge, in company with Professor Robert Hay, went south to Humboldt in order to explore the new so-called silver mines near the old townsite of Belmont, now known as Silver City. They found the native sandstone changed to a hard flint and quartzite.

"About 20 shafts have been opened to a depth of from 10 to 75 feet. One shaft contained quite a quantity of Amethyst; some specimens very fine. The Professor informs us that the excitement is quite high and many farmers have mortgaged their farms for enough to ruin them, should no metal in paying quantities be found."

These early settlers discovered that their silver or gold turned out to be "fool's gold." Modern scientists have determined that the formation is the product of a volcanic eruption and that the fool's gold is mica.

The Handbook of Woodson County, 1883, quotes — "The only silver bearing quartz yet discovered in Kansas is said to abound in the Belmont Hills, in the southern part of the county, where some sanguine capitalists have made liberal investments in lands, for the purpose of controlling the silver mining industry of the future and where they have located and christened the new town of Silver City sunk shafts, invested a large stock of confidence with their ducats, and taken out quartz for the inspection of eastern assayers."

Professor Mudge gave a general description of the area mentioning that he found amethyst, quartz and other minerals. He sent samples to be tested and expressed an opinion that the ore may have been "salted."

Although the mention of a town of Silver City being in existence, no town ever materialized. On the west slope of the hill we have been telling about, where the land levels off to an extent and near a large spring a town-

site was surveyed, but no lots were ever sold nor any buildings erected as the gold fever and excitement died down.

Oddly enough what the geologist call the Silver City dome is about a mile to the south of the hill we have been telling about, and that this hill forms the north rim of the basin. The center of this dome would be on the Woodson-Wilson County line.

The color of the rock on the hill where the mining was done is mostly a gray-green. There are only two places in Kansas where these igneous rocks are found. These igneous rocks were caused by volcanic action or great heat. Meaning that at some time back in history that an upheaval of some kind brought this material under great pressure with the heat and water forming the different chemicals.

While the gold and silver mines failed to materialize, down through the years other people and companies attempted to convert this unusual natural product into a usable product.

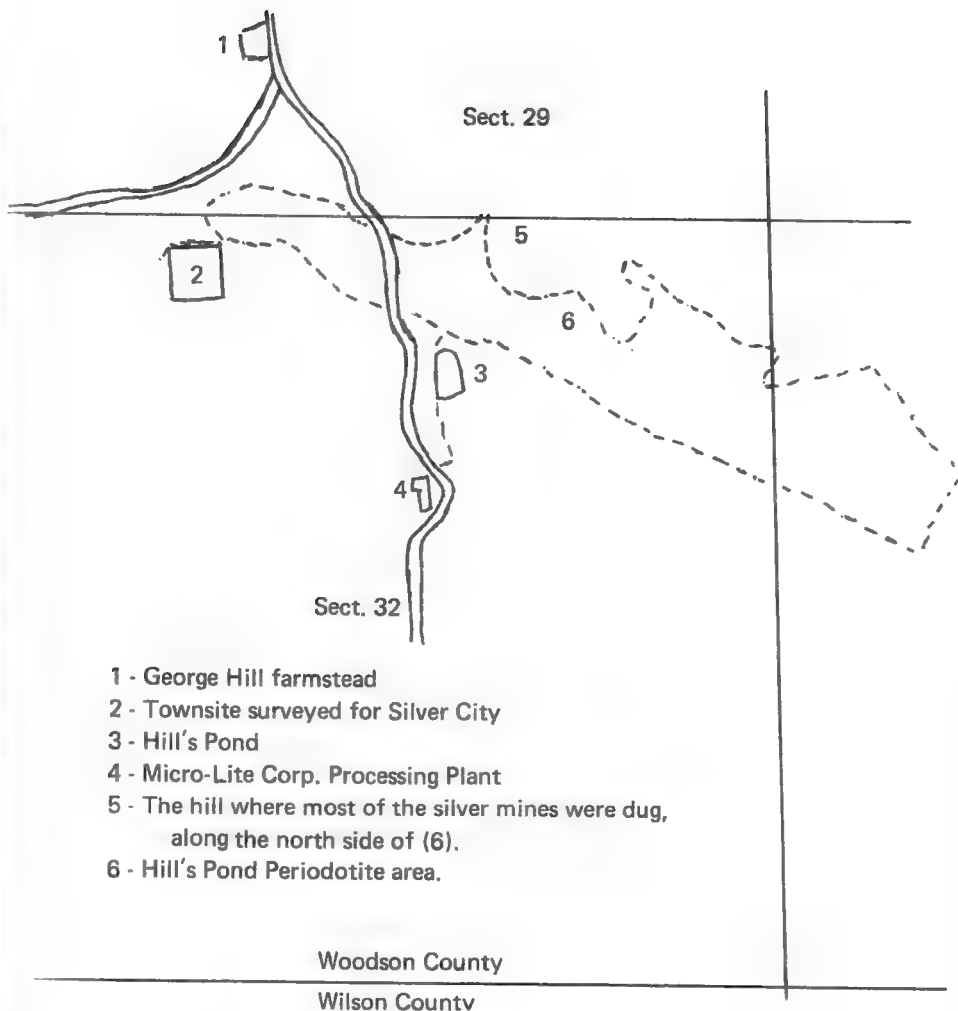
George Hill Sr. who at the time of the big stampede lived in north edge of Wilson County, about a mile from where all of the excitement was, helped in some of the digging. He drove a horse on a crude drilling rig in the drilling of a well or shaft. The rig was a wagon wheel with metal notches welded on the outside of the wheel, and with a lever attached to the wheel. As the wheel would turn the lever would go up and down on the notches thus raising the bit up and down to do the drilling.

Mr. Hill bought this farm in 1883, and lived through many more experiences of Silver City.

George Hill, Jr. was born on this farm, and he recalls that during his life time he has met many geologists and sightseers. The first one he remembers was about 1897 or '98. The man came from Lawrence in a buggy pulled by one horse.

About 1916 a gas company from Fredonia drilled two wells on the top of the southwest side of the Silver City structure to the top of the Mississippi line. Drilling through about 150 feet of mica at various depths.

In 1943-44, the Santa Fe Railroad got interested in the quartzsite for ballast and talked of running a spur line up from Benedict, but the supply would not warrant the cost. They wanted ten million tons, but the supply would have been two million tons.



- 1 - George Hill farmstead
- 2 - Townsite surveyed for Silver City
- 3 - Hill's Pond
- 4 - Micro-Lite Corp. Processing Plant
- 5 - The hill where most of the silver mines were dug,
along the north side of (6).
- 6 - Hill's Pond Periodotite area.

"The name Hill's Pond peridotite is here proposed for the igneous rock that weathers to a grayish-yellow micaaceous clay in the typical outdrop on the west bank of the south pond of the Hill farm in Belmont township, Woodson County.

Mr. Hill has in his possession, a letter written from the United States Department of the Interior, Geological Survey Washington D.C., in regard to the limestone on his farm writes — "The quartzite east of Mr. Hill's house is a metamorphic rock. It was formerly a sandstone that has been modified, by the addition of silica and by being subjected to considerable heat, to a very hard resistant rock. The greenish color is largely due to the presence of Chlorite."

On October 7, 1934, before the Seventh Annual West Buffalo Homecoming, F.B. Nichols delivered an address on, "The Silver City Laccolith."

Most of the deals along the same vein that we have told about, but we would like to quote a part of his address: "So far as I am aware, no geologist has expressed an opinion on the time when Silver City was formed, except to classify it as a topographic basin, and otherwise in the most general terms. In the belief of the authors I have been quoting, "no sedimentary formations are present in Woodson County younger in age than the igneous dykes and hydrothermal metamorphism, so the age of the igneous activity cannot be determined with any exactitude." All of which is a way of saying that they think that igneous activity at Silver City occurred after this region arose from the sea for the last time, which makes it comparatively recent from the vista of geology.

In conclusion the writers declare that "relationship between the described domes, (Silver City and Rose Dome) in Woodson County, Kansas, and intrusive igneous activity is sufficiently close to justify the doming by pushing up the sedimentary strata."

If that opinion on the formation of Silver City is accepted by residents of this community, as it has been by geologists the theory opens a thrilling field for speculation on the unusual events that occurred in our locality while the action was in progress. What was the appearance of that hill, for instance, when it was going through its period of travail? How would the heating of the rock layers at the Yellow Jacket shaft so they could be bent like tin effect the temperatures here where we are meeting today? Was there a huge flow of water into West Buffalo Creek?

Our community was shaped, except for later and still continuing erosion, by the energy of those gigantic forces which struggles on its western hills. They left their records in beautiful rocks, unusual slopes, valuable springs, and rich soils. Their titanic efforts fabricated a most dramatic epoch in the dim and far away beginning of West Buffalo.

WEST BUFFALO SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 28 —

In the south part of Woodson County a stream known as West Buffalo Creek winds around through the hills in that area. While this area was the Osage Indian Trust Land, settlers began coming into the area in the 1860's.

The early settlers came here to establish homes. Their occupation was farming and stock raising. A breaking plow turned the prairie sod. Corn was planted by hand and covered with a hoe. It was tilled with a single shovel plow. Wheat was sowed broadcast by hand and covered with a harrow, hay was cut with a scythe. The settlers all had wagons. Only part perhaps a third of the settlers owned oxen. Mr. Curns who lived on the Buell place, west of the school house, owned the last yoke of oxen in that neighborhood.

As the community became settled, the need arose for a school house. The first school was held in a log building about a mile to the north of where the school was later built.

In 1870, a frame school house was built in the southwest corner of the southeast quarter of section 27, Twp. 26, R. 15. A young man named George Hill, who lived just over in Wilson County was the builder of the new school house, perhaps with the help of some of the other patrons of the district.

The first teacher in this new school building was Kate Riggs. Buffalo school was named after the nearby creek of West Buffalo. At one time it was known as the "Surprise School in honor of the Surprise family." At one time earlier than this it was called the Brown School.

The West Buffalo Homecoming was started and designed to provide a common meeting place for present and former residents of the community. It was started in 1927.

Land was pre-empted for \$1.25 an acre. Taxes were light. A claim was not taxed until a deed was obtained. There was considerable stealing of cattle and horses in the early days. A serious drouth occurred in the West Buffalo community in 1874. It was also a bad grasshopper year. Little corn was raised but wheat yield was fairly satisfactory. Groups of Indians would occasionally pass through the neighborhood, but would cause no harm.

Most of the settlers lived in one or two room log houses. There were a few frame houses in the community in 1870. Two types of log houses were built, (1) out of round logs (2) out of hewed logs. Most of the cooking was done in the fireplace or over an open fire outdoors. A few of the settlers owned stoves. The equipment for cooking consisted mainly of a Dutch oven, frying pan, teakettle and coffee pot. Most of the bedsteads were homemade.

There was a postoffice at Buffalo City (now Buffalo) The mail came by stage from Humboldt.

WEST BUFFALO SCHOOL OF 19 - -



Back row- L to R: Roy Easley, Oscar Clark, Nettie Gillespie, Lewis Clark, Amanda Way, Clarence Gillespie, Gertie Easley, Rena Pickering, Ann Gillespie, Stella Way, Arthur Miller (Teacher) Middle row: Fleta Easley, Florence Milliron, Clara Pickering, Edie Crumrine, George Hill, Front row: Warner Way, Harold Gillespie, Cloyd Crumrine, Leland Clark, Dessie Gillespie, Flossie Pickering, Ella Gillespie, Iva Pickering, May Way, Avis Eagle, Gladys Young, Wilford Way, Kyle Eagle, Raymond Nichols, Orville Milliron, Otto Clark.

* * * *

Various teachers at West Buffalo District No. 28, beginning in 1881 were: Emma Patterson, Ada Smith, Euphrania Frame, Clunnice Allen, W.E. Campbell, John Bothwell, Viola Cartwright, C.H. Bigelow, J.F. Long, W.S. Jones, Clara Trembley, A.A. Miller, A.F. Ibbetson, Marion Woodside, Lucy Ellis, Belle Withers, Charlotte Meyers, Grace Guthrie, Elsie Ferris, Fred White, Florence Laude, Harry H. Brown, Neva Aronhalt, Clara Statan, Cecile Davidson, Ruth McCormick, Eva Puckett, Dessie Gillespie, Louise Raifsnnyder, May Turner, Ada Shotts, Margaret Wilson, Mabel Sommers, Elsie Gillespie, Goldie Williams, Eugene Etter, Nellie May Daniel, Emma Brownrigg, Hilda Thomas, Lorraine Charbeneau, Dorothy Hadaway, Vivian Jackson, Lena Jane Arthur, Mrs. Luenna Meirs, Romana Cutler, Vivian Eagle.

The last teacher was Vivian Eagle who taught the term of 1948-49.

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